



Tips for Every Age Group On How to Be a Safer Driver

While drivers of different ages certainly face different dangers on the road, we can all become better drivers by acknowledging these dangers and doing what we can to take precautions. Some of this boils down to common sense, like keeping your eyes on the road and your hands on the wheel, but some precautions require a bit of introspection, such as when our eyesight begins to fail but we want to retain our independence.

Staying safe on the road is important for a number of reasons. You want to ensure you get from point A to point B safe and sound, and that requires you to pay attention not only to what you're doing but to those around you. Failing to do so means you could end up involved in an accident, which can hurt you both physically and financially. Not only will you have to deal with the cost of car repairs, but you could also find that your auto insurance company has labeled you a "high risk" driver, which means your [premiums will increase](#) or you could lose coverage altogether.

With that in mind, here are some tips for every age group on how to be a safer driver.

For young drivers: Limit distractions

Distracted driving is technically performing any action that makes you use your eyes, hands, or brain on something that's not driving. Distracted driving is not just texting and driving, although that is a [big one](#). All age groups are guilty of distracted driving, but it tends to be more prevalent — and more dangerous — among new drivers who don't yet have much road experience.

Here is a non-comprehensive list of things teens do in their cars that qualify as [distracted driving](#): texting, talking on the phone, fiddling with Google maps, cycling through music, eating, applying makeup, smoking, and interacting with friends. That last one is a big distraction that some people do not consider. This is why some states have made it illegal for teens to transport more than one companion for the early years of their driving career. All young drivers should set ground rules that they are not to be [distracted by friends](#) if they are driving.

The golden rule is this: if you must do anything in your car that's not driving, just pull over. This includes adjusting your mirrors, seats, or dealing with any car settings. Even if the activity is driving safety-related, it's still distracting if performed while the car is in motion.

For adults: Try not to drive aggressively

We all know that adults are busy. Between your job, kids, their extracurriculars, and your extracurriculars, you are stretched thin when it comes to time. Trying to save time on a commute is one of the main reasons adults drive aggressively.

So, what is aggressive driving? If you're following a car closely, erratically changing lanes, rolling through stop signs, speeding up to beat yellow lights, passing in places where you shouldn't, speeding, and failing to yield, you are driving aggressively. It's thought that aggressive driving plays a factor in [over half](#) of all fatal car crashes.

One tip to ensure that you aren't tempted to drive aggressively is to give yourself more time. Simply [leave a little earlier](#) than you think you have to. This will give you ample time to follow all road laws and keep yourself — and others on the road — safe.

For seniors: Tips on safer driving as we battle age

As we age, our reflexes diminish. Our eyesight and hearing worsen. Our reaction time slows. It's not a particularly pleasant fact, but it's a fact nonetheless. [Some tips](#) that seniors can employ to try to counter these realities include driving during low-traffic times, taking roads that are less-busy, increasing stopping time between you and the car in front of you (at least 4 seconds), and driving in the right lane of the highway, where traffic moves at a slower pace.

Seniors must also be aware of when it's time to [give up the keys](#). Some warning signs that you may need to consider this include your reaction time makes you unable to judge when to pull out in front of cars and when not to, you begin to roll through stop signs, you speed and/or drive too slowly without noticing it for a while, and you have trouble seeing road signs.

Many seniors drive well into their 70s and 80s, and some realize it's a danger earlier on. It really is a case-by-case basis. If someone in your family confronts you about your driving, try not to get defensive. They just care about you and want to make sure you're safe.

No matter your age, you can benefit by taking some time to evaluate your own driving practices. You can't make the other drivers on the road better, but you can do your part to make the roads safer for everyone.

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